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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3444
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 1574
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4197
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7137
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 2712
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0025
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ DEC QUITO 0897
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 1012
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFIS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 004766

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/22/2016

TAGS: [PTER](#) [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: NARCO-TERRORISTS AMBUSH AND KILL FIVE POLICE AND
TWO ENACO INSPECTORS IN AYACUCHO

REF: 2005 LIMA 5203

Classified By: PolCouns Alexis Ludwig for reasons 1.4(C), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: On 12/16 in the VRAE region of Ayacucho eight people, including five police officers, were ambushed and killed by a group of suspected narco-terrorists. Two inspectors from the national company that regulates the legal coca market (ENACO) were also killed. DEA sources said the attack was a trap set-up by an informant tipping off a false cocaine shipment. On 12/18 a military patrol captured eight suspects; other fugitives remain at large. The ambush was similar to the December 2005 Sendero Luminoso (SL) attack killing five police in the VRAE. Police speculate that the perpetrators of the recent attack were SL remnants acting on behalf of narcotraffickers. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) On the morning of 12/16, a group of approximately 20 organized gunmen ambushed and attacked a police vehicle using automatic weapons. Five police officers, two employees of the National Coca Company (ENACO), and a civilian bystander were killed. The attack took place in the jungle region of La Mar province, Ayacucho department in the Ene and Apurimac River Valley (VRAE). According to Peruvian National Police (PNP) sources, remnants of Sendero Luminoso (SL) were involved in the ambush. On 12/18, a military patrol captured eight suspects with weapons allegedly used in the attack approximately 18 miles from the scene after a jungle pursuit.

¶3. (C) DEA sources said that an informant notified the local police of a cocaine shipment to set the trap for the attack. The police and ENACO workers, following the information, drove into a crossfire with little chance of defense. Press and other Post sources indicate that the police were protecting ENACO staff in route to conduct inspections for transport of illegal coca and precursor chemicals. (Note: ENACO is the state-owned company responsible for buying and selling licit coca and regulating the market. End Note.) Minister of Interior Pilar Mazzetti said the police and the Interior Ministry issued several reports over the past months to the local police bases recommending precautions for police in the region to prevent surprise attacks by remnants of SL. In a November TV interview "Artemio", SL leader in the Huallaga (not the VRAE), repeated the standing threat of terrorist actions against the state. DEA sources said the

attack in the VRAE was an attempt by the competing VRAE faction of the SL to make good on the threat.

¶4. (U) On 12/20 the Council of Ministers approved a plan to address the VRAE's confluence of narcotics, terrorists, and under-development. Elements of this VRAE Plan -- a Choice for Peace, Development, and Security for the People of the VRAE -- include \$30 million (USD) for military and police in the area and \$53 million (USD) for investment in infrastructure and social services. The plan aims to strengthen the operational capacity of the military and police and to improve the state presence in the region. (Note: The plan was announced in general terms in November but without funding commitments. End Note.)

¶5. (SBU) Comment: The profile of the attack is strikingly similar to the December 2005 attack in which five anti-drug police officers were ambushed and killed in the VRAE (Reftel). After a year of no lethal attacks directly targeting counternarcotics programs, SL may be sending a message that it remains active and dangerous and will confront counternarcotics efforts. While the GOP is internally pointing fingers to assign blame for the situation that allowed the police to be gunned-down, the risk of such an attack is constant in the VRAE where narcotrafficking reigns and the SL remnants are eager to lend support. End Comment.

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